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Dear Colleagues, Students, Friends, and Neighbors,

I have had the good fortune to be a public school superintendent for over 25 years in some of the most wonderful school districts in our country. And, I have enjoyed nearly every minute of that time serving the children of America.

My five years here in ACPS are among the most rewarding and emotional I have ever experienced. Some of you have poked fun at me for sending emails at 3 am, others have embraced (physically, emotionally, and intellectually) the sacred cause we have shared, and others have engaged in lively conversations about the work we have taken on. To all of you, thank you.

For personal and professional reasons, it is time for me to move on from ACPS. As a young man, I often listened to the Byrd's rendition of a bit of Ecclesiastes and have long recognized its wisdom:

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Our work together has been exhilarating and challenging. We have accomplished a great deal. Most importantly, we have grown and learned together how better to educate the remarkable students of Alexandria.

The list of accomplishments is long as is the work remaining to be addressed. There is a short list at the end of this note of what has been achieved, but lists of programs and data do not capture the essence of what makes ACPS so wonderful. For behind every program or piece of data there are caring and dedicated staff members who work tirelessly to assure the success of each and every student. What I believe, in fact what I know, is that we have put in place systems and programs so that our students will benefit because of the work of the staff who breathe life into written proposals and data charts.

I look forward to volunteering my time in the months ahead to national organizations, foundations, universities, and other areas which are so much a part of my passion to serve children and their families.

Even more important, I expect to spend more time with our four grandchildren because as you know, family is always first.

Wishing all of you lifetimes of happiness, good health, peace, and love.

Mort Sherman

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A brief list of accomplishments as we have worked together:

- developed comprehensive strategic plan (received NSBA Magna Award)
- created K - 12 curriculum
- revised teacher and administrator evaluation systems
- renewed T.C. Williams High School from persistently lowest achieving to nationally ranked on Washington Post Challenge Index
- increased preschool classes sevenfold
- Implemented AVID and IB
- Created new systems of accountability
- Aligned strategic plan with School Education Plans and Professional Learning Plans
- Created Individual Career and Academic Plans for all secondary students
- Lowered and maintained low elementary class sizes
- Teachers received raises each year of the recession
- Implemented High School Satellite program at one of the local shopping malls
- Revised secondary alternative education model
- Managed nearly 30% student enrollment increase
- restructured adult education so that emphasis is on a high school diploma; for those who wish to receive a GED, we received a grant to connect their learning to job preparation
- Personalized and customized approaches have been introduced through STEM and an International Academy
- Added over 25 classrooms to existing facilities
- created the lowest high school student/counselor ratio in the region, perhaps the country
- started the health clinic on campus at T.C.
- set goals to close the achievement gaps